

Now we have an opportunity to finish the job and pass national welfare reform legislation. Real welfare reform should impose time limits and require work and provide child care, too, so that people can go to work without hurting their children. It should strengthen our child support enforcement laws even more and do more to protect children. I've challenged Congress to send me bipartisan legislation that reflects these principles. For example, if everyone in America who owes child support legally and can pay it did so, 800,000 women and children would leave the welfare rolls tomorrow.

Now, 6 months ago the Republican majority in Congress sent me welfare legislation it had backwards. It was soft on work and tough on children, failing to provide child care and health care so that people can move from welfare to work without hurting their children, imposing deep and unacceptable cuts in school lunch, child welfare, and help for disabled children. That bill came to me twice, and I vetoed it twice.

Since then, I'm pleased to report, there has been considerable bipartisan progress toward real welfare reform. Many of the worst proposals I objected to have been taken out. Many of the improvements I asked for have been put in. The legislation has steadily improved as it's moved through Congress. Earlier this week, by an overwhelming bipartisan majority, the Senate passed a welfare reform bill that does provide health care and child care and took some important strides to protect our children. But we still have more work to do to promote work and protect children, though we've come a long way in this debate and we mustn't go back.

To those who have doubts about any welfare reform, I say we will never lift children out of poverty and dependency by preserving a failed system that keeps them there. And to those who would undo the progress of recent weeks by sending me another extremist bill like the ones I vetoed, I'd say we can only transform this broken system if we do right by our children and put people to work so they can earn a paycheck, not draw a welfare check. That's the only kind of welfare reform I can sign.

We have a chance to make history. Our welfare system has nagged at our national

conscience for far too long. And if we'll put politics aside and work together, we can once again make welfare what it was meant to be: a second chance, not a way of life.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: This statement was prepared for use as the President's radio address on July 27 but was not broadcast.

Remarks to the Disabled American Veterans Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana

July 28, 1996

Thank you very much. Thank you for the exuberant welcome. I want to thank the ladies of the auxiliary for leading the applause for Hillary; that was a nice thing to do. Thank you very much. That was a very nice thing.

I want to thank Commander McMasters for that introduction. It's been so long I'd forgotten I'd done some of those things. *[Laughter]* And he mentioned that I was a saxophone player. I think we have a Navy band over there; I want to thank the Navy band. Thank you for being here and for playing. I'll always laugh any time someone says I'm a saxophone player now because a couple of weeks ago, Colonel John Bourgeois, the Commander of the United States Marine Band, the President's own, retired as one of the longest serving conductors of the Marine Band. And he did a television interview on national television in which he was asked about my saxophone playing, and having sworn an oath to truth, he said that I was adequate. *[Laughter]* And painfully, I admit that that is about all he could say. And that's why I'm here today in this position rather than playing for you in your entertainment. *[Laughter]*

I'm delighted to be here with Commander McMasters; with your senior vice commander, Gregory Reed; Barbara Hicks, your auxiliary national commander; Art Wilson, your national adjutant; the other officers of your distinguished organization, and with all of you.

I'm glad to be joined today by Secretary Jesse Brown. *[Applause]* You know, the first time I realized that you would cheer like that—I love to kid Jesse and I was kidding

him on the way in, and I said, "You think they give that kind of reaction because they love you so much or because they're glad I took you off of their hands?" [*Laughter*] I think it's the former, and I think you should.

I'm also delighted to be joined today by a number of State officials from the State of Louisiana and by Congressman Bill Jefferson and Congressman Cleo Fields. I thank them for coming.

Ladies and gentleman, as veterans who have given so much to defend our country, you know what it is personally to face an enemy. Today we have an enemy it is difficult to face because the enemy is so often hidden, killing at random, surfacing only to perform cowardly acts. Their aim is to demoralize us as a people and to spread fear into everyday life. We must not let them do that. As Americans, we can and must join together to defeat terrorism wherever it strikes and whoever practices it.

We all are outraged by what happened in the Centennial Olympic Park in Atlanta. And we all admire the athletes, the thousands of volunteers, the tens of thousands of fans who made a strong statement to the world yesterday when they showed up and carried on the Olympics, saying that they would not be intimidated by terrorism and that no terrorist could kill the Olympic spirit.

What we saw yesterday was a symbol of an emerging consensus among all responsible nations and freedom-loving people everywhere that we have to work closely together to stop the spread of terrorism. We know from the Tokyo subway to the streets of Tel Aviv to the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia where we lost 19 of our fine Air Force personnel, that terrorism is a problem that knows no boundaries. We have learned here so painfully in America, from the World Trade Center to Oklahoma City, that attacks from terrorists can be homegrown or can be generated in other lands. We know that nations are beginning to understand that there is no place that is safe when any place is vulnerable to terrorists.

Not very long ago after the upsurge of terrorist attacks in Israel, we had a remarkable meeting of 29 nations at Sharm al-Sheikh in Egypt, where for the first time 13 Arab States condemned terrorism in Israel. It was the be-

ginning of wisdom, because, as the Saudis have seen, there is no nation which can hide from terrorism unless we all recognize that the rules of civilized people do not permit it to be practiced.

The recent meeting of the G-7 nations in France produced a significant increase in international measures to cooperate against terrorism. And this week, following up on that, we will have a very important conference in Paris, France, involving those nations with high-level representatives to deal with the questions that terrorism presents us.

Terrorists are often supported by states. And states that sponsor or permit terrorism, including Iraq, Iran, Libya and Sudan, and any others, must face strong sanctions. We all have to say we cannot live with this; it is wrong. People must seek to resolve their differences by ways other than killing innocent civilians.

This year I signed into law an antiterrorism act which made terrorism a Federal offense, expanded the role of the FBI in solving these crimes, and imposed the death penalty for terrorism. As strong as the bill was, it did not give our law enforcement officials some of the powerful tools I had recommended because they wanted and needed them, including increased wiretap authority for terrorists who are moving from place to place—where they are flexible, so must we be—and chemical markers, often called taggants, for the most common explosives, black and smokeless powder, so that we can track down those who make bombs that kill innocent people.

This morning I was very encouraged to hear the Speaker of the House, Mr. Gingrich, express a willingness to consider these tougher measures. I have asked the Speaker; majority leader, Senator Trent Lott; the leaders of the Democratic minority, Senator Daschle and Mr. Gephardt; and the FBI Director, Louis Freeh, to come to the White House tomorrow to help to agree on a package that will provide these additional protections against terrorism and any other measures we need to take to increase the protection of the American people.

We will continue to do whatever is necessary to give law enforcement the tools they need to find terrorists before they strike and

to bring them swiftly to justice when they do. This week I announced new measures aimed at increasing airport security, increasing baggage searches and screening, to tighten passenger checks, to plan the deployment of the latest X-ray technologies. I said then, and I will say again, I am well aware that these new security measures will increase inconvenience and may even carry a modest increased cost to the air-traveling public. But this inconvenience is a small price to pay for better peace of mind when our loved ones board a plane. These measures went into effect immediately.

And so, my fellow Americans, we have opened up three fronts against terrorism. We're increasing international efforts to ensure that terrorists will have no place to plan or hide their operations. We're making use of expanded antiterrorism powers at home, including the death penalty. And we are tightening airport security. We will continue to expand our efforts on all three fronts against terrorism.

I want to remind you that we have had some results. We have seen a record number of terrorists captured and convicted. We have thwarted a number of planned terrorist attacks, including a serious one against the United Nations and one against the United States airlines flying out of the West Coast over the Pacific. We are keeping the heat on terrorist organizations and those who would support them.

But I would remind you that every death is one death too many. And we have seen now over many, many years, from the struggles of our allies, as well as from those we have faced recently, that this is a long, hard fight. But if we work together, this is a challenge we can and will meet. It may well be the most significant security challenge of the 21st century to the people of the United States and to civilized people everywhere. And the veterans of the United States, I know, will support our country being as strong and tough and smart and steadfast as it takes to get the job done.

Now, let me continue by saying to you that when I ran for President I promised the veterans of America I would appoint a true advocate as Secretary of Veterans Affairs. I found that person among your ranks. Jesse

Brown honed his skills while serving as executive director of the DAV. He and his deputy, Hershel Gober, who is also here with me today, I believe make up one of the finest leadership teams in the entire Federal Government. I can tell you this: Not only in public but in private, in every meeting on any subject, they are consistently committed to a better life for all veterans. And I thank them for their service.

I'm also honored to join you in celebrating three-quarters of a century of service to your country. You are the best representatives of what I'd like to talk about today: the duty we owe to our veterans; the duty we owe to each other and to our children; the duty we owe to the rest of the world and to our future. We owe a duty to all of you, of course, not only for your bravery and sacrifice but for all you continue to do for each other, your families, and our country.

Last year we celebrated the 50th anniversary of World War II. Many of you fought in that great struggle and put your lives on the line for freedom. Your country owes you a debt of gratitude we can never repay. And I can honestly say one of the most humbling honors of my life was representing the United States at those ceremonies in 1994 and 1995. But I want to say again to you, to every American who served in World War II, including the Republican candidate for President, Senator Bob Dole: Thank you for your service; thank you for your sacrifice; thank you for your courage. We're still around because of you. And to all who have served since, in Korea and Vietnam, in the Persian Gulf, in Bosnia, in peacetime as well as wartime, America thanks you, too, and so do freedom-loving people all around the world.

Your tradition of service, of course, extends beyond the battlefield. This is also the 50th anniversary of the VA Voluntary Service Program's involvement of the DAV. Last year you donated more volunteer hours at VA hospitals around the country than any other organization. I want to congratulate your volunteers of the year whom I had the privilege to meet just a moment ago, Tillman Rutledge and Dorothy Marie Waters. They are great examples of what you stand for. Thank you. Thank you. [Applause]

You have done your duty to America, and America must do its duty to you. Secretary Brown and I recognize a simple truth: When men and women leave the service we must not leave them. In keeping our veterans' commitments, our commitments to our veterans, to help them make the most of their own lives does not only help veterans and their families, it's made America a better and stronger place. From education to employment, from buying a home to getting quality medical care, our veterans deserve our Nation's support. And when we give it our Nation is better off. For the past 3½ years that is what we have done.

Even as we cut Government spending to reduce the deficit and move toward a balanced budget, I have asked for a billion-dollar increase in funding for the VA, more than half for medical care and discretionary programs, including funds for a new hospital and nursing home in Brevard County, Florida, and a replacement hospital at Travis Air Force Base in California.

We are committed to keeping the VA health care system strong into the 21st century, and we know that requires us to carry out a dramatic restructuring that will improve the quality of care and make our hospitals more patient-centered and less bureaucratic. Last year I sent to Congress legislation that will allow us to simplify the complex and arcane eligibility rules and improve access to care at VA hospitals. I am pleased that Congress is beginning to act on this important proposal, and I hope they will get a bill to me this year. Very soon we will submit legislation for a pilot project to allow Medicare-eligible veterans to obtain treatment at a VA facility and to have the costs reimbursed by Medicare.

I also want to make special mention of the extraordinary care that is provided by our veterans facilities to people with spinal cord injuries and my commitment to continue the work and research and care in this important area. Recently, after a visit with Christopher Reeve, I was pleased to announce that we are increasing our research commitment \$10 million a year in this year. And I hope all of you noticed just a few days ago that we finally are beginning to show some incredible results where nerve transplants from the ribs

to the spinal cord of laboratory animals have succeeded in giving laboratory animals some mobility in their limbs again. We can do better on this, and we have to keep going until we have some real success.

We have also reached out to veterans service organizations, appointing veterans as delegates to the White House Conference on Aging and the Presidential delegation to Vietnam. We established the first ever inter-agency veterans policy groups to coordinate and spur progress on issues of concern to veterans and military organizations. One such issue for more than two decades has been the suffering of our Nation's Vietnam veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange. In May, I announced that Vietnam veterans with prostate cancer and peripheral neuropathy are entitled to disability payments based on their exposure to Agent Orange. Just this week I sent to Congress legislation to provide an appropriate remedy for children of Vietnam veterans who suffer from spina bifida.

We have also responded aggressively to Persian Gulf illnesses. As the First Lady was traveling around the country talking about health care to people all over America, she kept coming back to the White House with stories of people who had served in the Persian Gulf conflict who had difficulties that were otherwise inexplicable. She got very involved, even emotionally involved, with some of the families, and she kept hammering on me that there had to be an explanation for this and there was no other conceivable explanation for some of these instances of difficulties. She encouraged me to appoint a Presidential Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses. I did that and charged them to leave no stone unturned in finding the cause of the illnesses and improving care available to Persian Gulf veterans. Meanwhile, we have made available for the first time ever compensation to the victims of undiagnosed illnesses who served in the Gulf war. I think they did the right thing there.

One other area of endeavor is especially important to me, improving the contributions of all of our veterans to the maintenance of their own lives and their families and our communities. Today as we celebrate the sixth anniversary of the Americans With Disabil-

ities Act, I want to reiterate a pledge I made in 1992. Our disability policy should be based as a nation on three simple principles: inclusion, independence, and empowerment.

I know how hard you fought, along with others in the disability community, for the passage of this important legislation. We've made vigorous laws protecting all people with disabilities a top priority. We'll continue to do so until all the barriers come down. Consistent with that commitment, my budget for 1997 proposes an increase in the resources available to enforce the Americans With Disabilities Act.

One of the main objectives of the act is to improve employment possibilities for people with disabilities. Unemployment among disabled veterans in particular is still too high. I am pleased that Ron Drach, DAV's employment director, is serving as Vice Chair of the President's Committee on Employment of People With Disabilities. I thank him for his hard work to turn those employment numbers around. And we should all be grateful that he is on the job.

Beyond the duty we owe to our veterans, there are certain duties we all owe to each other and to our country if our children are to live in a 21st century that is full of peace and possibility. First, we have to give the American dream of opportunity to everyone who is willing to work for it. That means we have to have an economy that is strong and growing, that produces good jobs with growing incomes.

When I became President, I was worried about the drift in our economy and the increasing divisions within it. We've put in place an aggressive strategy to reduce the deficit, because that would get interest rates down and spur private investment and remove a burden from future generations; to increase trade so that we could sell more American products and services around the world in a global economy; and to invest in our people and their potential so that everyone could participate in this global economy in a positive way over the long run.

We invested in education, in how to protect the environment while growing the economy, in transportation, in research and technology, in defense conversion to help those communities that had helped us to win

the cold war so that they wouldn't be left out in the cold. We even lowered the average closing cost for first-time homebuyers by \$1,000 so young families could start getting in homes again instead of just having a distant dream. [Applause] Thank you.

It's been a remarkable turnaround in these last 3½ years. The deficit was lowered from \$290 billion a year when I became President; it will be \$117 billion this year, a 60 percent reduction. It's the first time since John Tyler was President in the 1840's that an administration has reduced the deficit 4 years in a row. And I'm proud of that. I have to tell you, by the way, that my staff is pleading with me to stop using that statistic because John Tyler was not reelected, but—[laughter]—still it sounds great because it's true, and it's important.

Our economy has produced 10 million new jobs, 3.7 million new homeowners, 8 million homeowners who have refinanced their mortgages at lower interest rates. Homeownership is at a 15-year high. Exports are at a record. For 3 years in a row we've had a record number of new small businesses formed in America. And for the first time in a decade, incomes are actually going up for average American working people again. This is important. It matters.

Veterans employment—veterans unemployment has dropped by nearly a third, from 7.2 percent to 4.9 percent in January of 1996. Six million veterans have received training and job search assistance through the Department of Labor in the last 3½ years. Two million now have jobs. We are clearly moving in the right direction.

We have other responsibilities as well. And I want to just mention a couple. One is heavily on my mind at this moment. We have a responsibility to make our streets and our schools and our neighborhoods safer. The United States cannot tolerate the rates of crime and violence which have come to be almost commonplace in our country in the last several years. We have to intensify our efforts to reduce crime.

The deaths of two police officers within a 24-hour period right here in New Orleans last week painfully drove that point home to everyone who knew about them. I had the opportunity to meet with their families just

before coming in here. And I want to personally offer my condolences to the families of Officers Joey Thomas and Chris McCormick, who died while protecting the citizens of this city. They, too, were patriots who paid the ultimate price. And I know you join me in praying for their families.

In the past 3½ years we have tried to change the Nation's approach to crime from rhetoric to action. We've had a clear strategy: Look at what works and make it happen everywhere. When I became President, to be perfectly frank, even though we had a high crime rate, there were cities all over the country that had already begun to lower their crime rate. And I went to those places and asked them how they were doing it. It was obvious to me what was going on. They were putting more police on the street, out from behind the cars, out from behind the desk, walking the streets, getting to know kids, getting to know neighbors, working with them, preventing crime as well as catching criminals more quickly.

I asked them what they needed, and they told me. And that became the crime bill that we passed in 1994: 100,000 police on the street, a ban on assault weapons, tougher punishment for people who are serious criminals, and prevention programs to help kids stay out of crime in the first place. We also passed the Brady bill that kept 60,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers from buying handguns, and there wasn't a single hunter that lost his or her hunting weapons. So we did the right thing, and for 4 years in a row crime has been coming down in the United States. We can be proud of that.

But it is not enough. We're now going around the country trying to explain to communities how they can, without the fear of legal challenge, institute curfew policies, as New Orleans has, for juveniles in a way that has dramatically lowered the juvenile crime rate here and in a positive way has helped a lot of juveniles to sort through their own problems and get back on the right track in life. School uniform policies and tough truancy policies, like so many California communities I've seen have implemented in a way that has increased learning in the schools and diminished crime beyond the schoolyard.

There are more things we can do in this way, and we must all continue to do it.

We have a responsibility to reform the welfare system. I'm sure you've all seen the big debate about welfare in Washington. Let me just say that we have been working for 3½ years on that through a provision of existing law which allows the President to say to any State in the country that presents a plan to move people from welfare to work and to require them to move from welfare to work, you can get around all the Federal rules and regulations if you're doing that.

But let me ask you as you see this debate unfold in the next few days to think about your own family and ask yourself, "Well, what do I really want to change in the welfare system?" I think to answer the question you have to say, "What do I want for poor people in America; how would I like for them to be able to live?" And I think what we want for them is what we want for middle class families and, indeed, for upper income families in America. We want people to have strong families and successful work lives. We want them to succeed when they go to work and when they're working at raising their children. And we don't want them to have to choose. We want them to do both. And that's exactly what we want other families in America to do as well, success at home and success at work. And if we have a system that undermines either one, America is weaker because of it.

So we have worked hard. We've got 75 percent of everybody on welfare now under welfare-to-work experiments in a way that enables them to continue to support their children when they leave the welfare rolls and go onto the work rolls. And that's what we ought to want for every American. There are 1.3 million fewer people on welfare today than there were the day I became President. This will work. We can move people from welfare to work if we do it in the right way.

The other big part of this is that people who owe it ought to pay their child support. When I became President we were collecting \$8 billion a year in child support. Now we're collecting 11 billion, a 40 percent increase. But you need to know that if every person in this country who owes support for their own children is legally obligated to pay it and

is financially able to pay it, if they paid it all tomorrow, tomorrow morning there would be 800,000 fewer women and children on welfare in the United States. So that's a big part of this and a big part of why we need national legislation to reform the welfare law.

So we're working hard with the Congress to try to get a welfare reform bill out so we can cover all the States, all the people and have even tougher child support enforcement, especially for the cases across State lines. But remember when you hear this debate and you hear people propose certain things, ask yourself, "What do I want for those families, and don't I want for them the same thing I want for the families in my neighborhood and the families of America, success at home and success at work?" And I think if we think about it that way we'll make the right decisions.

Finally, let me say we have a responsibility to finish the work of balancing the budget, but to do it in a way that is consistent with our values and our long-term interests, which is, in my view, taking care of the health care needs of seniors, people with disabilities, poor children; making sure that we continue to invest in education and protecting the environment and other things that are critical to our future; making sure we do not increase the burdens on the hardest pressed working families. But we can do that, and I am committed to it.

And lastly, we have a responsibility to maintain the national defense and to continue to be the world's strongest force for peace and freedom. As we enter the—near the end of the most successful drawdown in our history, our military readiness has never been higher. We continue to have the best equipped, the best trained, the best prepared military in the world. And we must always have that. Whether we're standing down aggression in the Persian Gulf, restoring democracy in Haiti, safeguarding the peace in Bosnia, saving lives in Rwanda, working with NATO and our new allies from the former Communist bloc in the Partnership For Peace, our service men and women have proven their abilities time and time again in the last 3½ years.

Our funding and support for them must not falter, first for military technology, to meet any new challenges now or in the future and, even more important, to support the men and women in uniform. For they are the most precious resource in our military arsenal, and we have to be there for them.

Last year we set aside funds to ensure that military personnel received the highest pay raise allowed by law through the end of the century. We are committed to maintain and improve the quality of life for service members and their families around the globe, including better housing, community support, youth programs, and child care. They, too, have a right to know that if they're succeeding for us at their work, their homes are going to be successful and their children and their spouses are going to be taken care of. And that is a very, very important part of defense spending in this world.

There are a lot of things that we have to do for the future. We're working in Washington now to raise the minimum wage, to pass the Kassebaum-Kennedy bill, which will say you don't lose your health insurance if you change jobs or someone in your family gets sick. We're working hard on welfare reform. I hope that we can strengthen the family and medical leave law, which has permitted 12 million working Americans to take some time off when they've had a baby born or a sick parent without losing their jobs. And I'd like to see more done so that people could go to regular doctor's appointments with their parents or their kids or go to a parent-teacher conference at school without losing their jobs. We've got to make it possible for working parents to succeed at work and at home with their children and with their parents.

I want to make a college education available to every person in this country who's willing to work for it. I think we ought to—the most important tax cut we could pass in America today is to give people a deduction for the cost of college education, their own or their kids'. I would very much like to see us make the 2 years of education after high school that most Americans now get in community college, I want that to become just as universal in the next couple of years as a high school education is today. So I propose a tax credit for the cost of community college

for the next 2 years after high school. That would be a good thing to do.

And finally, let me just mention this last duty. We have a duty to respect our differences and to learn to bridge the gaps between us. If you look around the world today, what's fueling a lot of this terrorism? What caused all the slaughter in Burundi and Rwanda? Why did people who live for decades in peace in Bosnia all of a sudden become the sort of nagging agony of the entire world, slaughtering each other with reckless abandon after having lived in peace together for decades, neighbor against neighbor, killing each other? Why can't we fix what's gone wrong in the Middle East? Why did Northern Ireland start violence again after 15 months of peace when they've got the lowest unemployment rate in 15 years? And when Hillary and I went there, we were mobbed by Catholic and Irish young people alike saying, "We love peace. We don't want to go back to war." What happened?

Because throughout history there has been an atrocious tendency among human beings to give in to racial, ethnic, religious, and tribal hatred. And as your generation helped to ensure victory for us in the cold war so that billions of people every day didn't have to get up wondering about whether someone was going to drop a bomb on them from the Communists or the non-communist world, depending on what side of that cold war they lived on, and people were able to relax, too many have fallen back into the old patterns of racial, religious, ethnic, and tribal hatreds.

Why do people hate other people who are different from them? Either because they think they won't permit them to live as they want to live, or more likely, they really need somebody to look down on.

You know, I guess nobody has a perfect family, but I'll go to my grave being grateful for my mother telling me, don't you ever, don't you ever feel better because of somebody else's misfortune. You should feel better because of what you are and what you do. Don't ever think you've got to put somebody else down because of that.

But all over the world there are people that will get up tomorrow morning and start out the new week defining themselves in terms of who they can hate, who they can

look down on, who they can hurt. And it is a cancer of the modern world. We fight it on its most flagrant basis when we stand against terrorism. But we have to also recommit ourselves to purging every vestige of it in the United States.

The United States military has done a better job than any other organization in our society, I believe, in opening up opportunities for people based on merit, 250,000 new roles for women in the last 3½ years in the military. I'm proud of that. We not only have in General Powell an African-American who became Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, we have a record number of officers now reaching the general rank who are African-American, Hispanic-American, Asian-American, Arab-American, Jewish-American, coming from all kinds of backgrounds, in an organization that runs strictly on merit and depends upon performance for our very survival. And yet even there—the other day at Fort Bragg, one of the centers of our patriotism, the home of the Special Forces, African-American soldiers had swastikas painted on their doors. We have to work to purge this.

All of these church burnings—I just learned that over the weekend a church in my home State was burned—African-American churches, synagogues defaced, three Islamic centers burned. That is the opposite of what America is all about.

When Hillary and I visited our Olympic team and I looked at them, I can't help telling you, first of all, I was just bursting with pride. And I told them, I said, "You know, just the fact that you made this team should give you great pride and great joy. And you should go out among the people of the world here and relish the spirit of peace and freedom and equality that exists here."

And it was a magical moment. One of the young people said that they'd been to lunch the day before and the athletes from South Korea and North Korea were sitting at tables next to each other and talking. And I thought, shoot, I've been trying for 3½ years to get them to talk, and I couldn't do it. It was a magic moment. I couldn't do it.

But what struck me about the American team was this. If the American team broke up and was just walking in the Olympic Village, you could see them and think, well, that

athlete is from Africa; that athlete's from Latin America; that athlete's from the Caribbean; that athlete's from Scandinavia; that athlete's from the Middle East. But they could all be Americans, because we are bound together not by our race but by our fidelity to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Declaration of Independence, and our belief that we can all live here in peace and harmony and mutual respect.

So I leave you with that thought. If we meet our responsibilities to each other and to our children and to our future, our responsibilities to the world, and if we meet our fundamental responsibility to go forward together in mutual respect, then our days are going to get better and our best days are still to come. You can have an enormous influence wherever you live and whatever you do because of your service to America in uniform and because of the sacrifice of that service, if you will remind your fellow Americans of those fundamental lessons.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE. The President spoke at 1:52 p.m. at the Riverside Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Thomas A. McMasters III, national commander, Disabled American Veterans; and actor Christopher Reeve.

Remarks at the Children's Television Conference

July 29, 1996

The President. Good morning. We're delighted to see all of you here for this historic meeting. A lot of you have come a long way, some of you on the red-eye, and I appreciate the efforts you've made to be here.

We're here for a clear purpose: to improve and expand educational television for our children. The ability of the United States to make the 21st century the age of greatest possibility in our Nation's history depends in no small measure on our ability to build strong families today; to help our parents to succeed not only in the workplace but in their most important job, raising good, well-educated, well-balanced, successful children.

That is why we have worked so hard to give our families more control over one of the most influential forces in our Nation, tel-

evision. As all of you know better than I, it is now a major part of our national landscape. A typical child watches 25,000 hours of television before his or her 18th birthday. Preschoolers watch 28 hours of television a week, and at least during the Olympics, so do Presidents.

We have dedicated ourselves to giving parents the power to screen out television they believe their children should not see. That's what the V-chip was all about. I was proud to sign the telecommunications law with the V-chip requirement to give parents the ability to stop programming that they think is inappropriate for their young children to see.

You in the entertainment industry have certainly been doing your part. Meeting here in the White House 5 months ago, you volunteered to rate shows for content. You came together as responsible corporate citizens to give America's families an early-warning system. Parents who use the V-chip will now be able to block objectionable shows before it's too late.

Together these initiatives constitute an invaluable arsenal for America's parents. And I'd also like to point out that this is a challenge being met in the appropriate way by people working together and coming together, not fighting and drifting apart.

But that is only half the battle. As Americans we have to define ourselves not simply by what we stand against, but more importantly by what we stand for. Now we have the opportunity to use the airwaves for something positive, educational programming as great as our kids. Television can be a strong and positive force. It can help children to learn. It can reinforce rather than undermine the values we work so hard to teach our children, showing children every day what it means to share, to respect themselves and others, to take responsibility for their actions, to have sympathy with others who have difficulties, even to recognize that "it's not easy being green."

This morning I would like to hear from you about what we can do to broaden the range of quality educational programming for children. I hope we can focus on three specific issues. First, I'd like to talk about the new research that shows how kids can learn valuable lessons from TV over the course of